

Children's Integrated Services Specialized Child Care Services

DRAFT - 8/30/10 - DRAFT

CIS - Specialized Child Care Services is a menu of available supports for particular populations of children and families. CIS Specialized Child Care Services are intended to increase access to and enhance success in high quality child development programs for these children so that progress on children's safety, family stability, and optimal wholesome development is achieved.

The particular populations identified for these services include:

- Children with open cases with the Family Services Division (FSD) of the Department for Children and Families (DCF)
- Children with special physical or developmental needs
- Families experiencing significant, short term stress

I. Access to Quality Child Development Programs:

1. Serve as primary service coordinator for families served by CIS whose primary CIS service need is child care, connecting them with other services and supports beyond child care as needed.
2. Monitor and increase the regional supply of high quality child care providers approved as Specialized Child Care Services providers that are affordable for families with 100% benefit in the Child Care Financial Assistance Program
3. Maintain a collaborative working relationship with the regional Child Care Referral Specialist in order to:
 - a. Provide families referred to CIS with information about the importance of high quality child care; and
 - b. Support them in finding and enrolling with a provider that is the best match for their child and family.
4. Assist families referred to CIS in navigating the Child Care Financial Assistance Program processes and accessing appropriate benefits by:
 - a. Providing guidance and support in applying for benefits through the DCF Economic Services Division (ESD);
 - b. Process Child Care Financial Assistance Program applications for those families where a service need of Family Support (FS) or Child with a Special Health Need (CSHN¹) is warranted;
 - c. Bring consideration of FS applications to the CIS as part of the CIS service array and communicate team decisions to families; and

¹ Child with a Special Health Need (CSHN) in this context indicates the family's service need designation related to their Child Care Financial Assistance Program (FAP) benefit. The FAP is a financial benefit program through the Child Development Division to help families pay for their child's attendance in State regulated child development programs.

- d. Assist children in families authorized for child care financial assistance with a service need of FS or CSHN in identifying an affordable, high quality Specialized Child Care provider who is a good match for a family's needs.
5. Assist FSD social workers and families authorized with a service need of Protective Services (PS) in identifying a Specialized Child Care Provider that is a good match for a family's needs and resources (considering a family's needs and resources over time, including time after involvement with the FSD ends).
6. Process child enrollment with an approved provider in the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) for children with a service need of PS, FS and CSHN in the Child Care Financial Assistance Program

II. Access to transportation services:

1. Assist families eligible for transportation support as defined by service need to process necessary documentation in BFIS.
2. Coordinate with CDD approved transportation providers to ensure transportation is available and provided to eligible families.

III. Support to Specialized Child Care providers:

1. Recruit high quality child care providers to provide Specialized Child Care Services.
2. Assist child care providers in becoming Specialized Child Care Providers by connecting them with training that meets Specialized Child Care Provider status requirements.
3. Assist child care providers in adjusting their environments or program activities to meet the needs of these particular populations of children or to make accommodations necessary to meet the individualized needs of enrolled children.
4. Assist child care providers in accessing resources to support children and their families enrolled in their care (including other CIS services, other State and regional services, and special accommodations grants).
5. Assist child care providers in accessing statewide systems for professional development and continuous quality improvement (including the Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS), and Northern Lights Career Development Center).